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Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 of Security Council resolution 2104 (2013), in which the Council requested that I continue to inform it of progress in implementing the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), and to bring to its attention any serious violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area (S/2011/384, annex).

2. The report provides an update on the situation in Abyei as well as on the deployment and operations of UNISFA since my previous report of 29 July 2013 (S/2013/450). In addition, it provides an update on progress made in the implementation of the additional tasks mandated to the Force under Security Council resolutions 2024 (2011) and 2104 (2013) with respect to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.

II. Security situation

3. During the period under review, the security situation in the Abyei Area was generally calm, but remained highly unpredictable. The lack of concrete progress in the establishment of the Abyei Area joint institutions has created a dangerous political and administrative vacuum and tensions have concurrently been rising between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities over the holding of a referendum in October 2013, as proposed by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel on 21 September 2012.

4. There were no new incursions by unauthorized elements into the Abyei Area during the reporting period. The Sudan Oil Police, however, maintained approximately 120 to 150 personnel inside the Diffra oil complex in violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement and Security Council resolutions 1990 (2011), 2032 (2011), 2046 (2012), 2047 (2012), 2075 (2012) and 2104 (2013).

5. Few security incidents related to intercommunal violence took place during the reporting period. The end of the Misseriya migration in July and the overall limitations on movement imposed by the ongoing rainy season minimized the contacts between the two communities. On 6 August, UNISFA troops observed two dead bodies approximately three kilometres north-west of Noong village in central

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Abyei. Witnesses reported that a number of thieves had arrived in the village on that day and attempted to steal cattle. Two of them were killed as a result of retaliatory action taken by local Ngok Dinka residents. The identity of the victims remains unknown and UNISFA is currently investigating the incident. On 13 August, six to seven unidentified armed assailants entered Mikol village, approximately 3 kilometres east of Abyei town, at around midnight, and attacked a Ngok Dinka resident with a machete. According to witnesses whose testimonies are currently being verified by UNISFA, a neighbour came to the resident's rescue and killed one of the assailants with a gun. The witnesses further stated that the deceased assailant was a Ngok Dinka community member who was part of a cross-border criminal group composed of both Ngok Dinka and Misseriya.

6. As part of its mandate to maintain security and protect civilians in the area, UNISFA engaged in disarming of the local communities. On 28 July, four men with two AK-47 rifles and 250 rounds of ammunition were disarmed in Manyang, approximately 10 kilometres south of Abyei town. On 19 August, UNISFA troops disarmed a man carrying one firearm and two bullets at the Farouk checkpoint. In both incidents, UNISFA took custody of the seized weapons, pending the establishment of the joint administration.

7. With the onset of the rainy season and resulting limitations on movement, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) suspended mine clearance operations in the Abyei Area in accordance with its standard operating procedures. The Mine Action Service utilized this period to review and update mine action procedures, prepare for upcoming operations and integrate new staff members into its programme. Consultations are also under way for UNMAS to provide additional training to the Ethiopian demining platoon during the next dry season.

III. Political developments

8. The Sudan and South Sudan made no progress with respect to implementation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement during the reporting period. Following the killing of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief on 4 May 2013, the Government of South Sudan has consistently refused to participate in any meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee. As a result, the Committee has not met since 2 May 2013. In order to mitigate the tensions deriving from this blockage, the UNISFA Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major-General Yohannes Tesfamariam, urged the Sudan and South Sudan co-chairs of the Committee to maintain open channels of communication and to encourage community leaders to implement the Committee's decision of 2 May to make Abyei a weapon-free area.

9. In the absence of joint temporary institutions, the Government of South Sudan has stated its intention to re-establish its own administrative structures. On 23 August 2013, the South Sudan co-chair of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee issued a written order dismissing four members of the former Abyei Area Administration, which was established under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 and dissolved by Omar al-Bashir, President of the Sudan, following the May 2011 violence between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. In a second order issued the same day, the South Sudan co-chair appointed a new Abyei community coordinating executive committee and Abyei community coordination council. According to the order, these bodies would

perform functions such as coordination of humanitarian assistance, facilitation of the return of displaced Ngok Dinka, supervision of the provision of social services and, in coordination with UNISFA, maintenance of law, order and peace. The Head of Mission of UNISFA informed the co-chair that, in view of its mandate, the Mission could not work with or support any unilaterally appointed administration.

10. The parties have also made no progress on the resolution of the final status of the Abyei Area. The 21 September 2012 proposal of the High-level Implementation Panel was accepted by the Government of South Sudan but rejected by the Government of the Sudan. Local Ngok Dinka dignitaries and Government of South Sudan officials publicly stated on 23 August, that a referendum should take place in the Abyei Area in October 2013 in accordance with the proposal and have been encouraging the return of the Ngok Dinka population to Abyei for this purpose. On 19 August, the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs of South Sudan issued an order stating that President Salva Kiir had directed that all "citizens of Abyei working in public institutions, whether at the national or state level, should be allowed to take time off in order to go home and register and participate in the said referendum".

11. During the reporting period, the number of Ngok Dinka returnees to areas north of the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab River reached approximately 33,000. On 23 August, UNISFA observed a settlement of 100 to 150 Ngok Dinka youth residing in approximately 70 temporary shelters in the vicinity of Makir, which is located 15 kilometres north-west of Abyei town. The group indicated to the Mission that they had arrived in the Abyei Area from Juba, Wau and other locations in South Sudan in order to take part in the October 2013 referendum. They added that more people were likely to arrive in the coming days, including their families. UNISFA also observed a rise in the population of Agok and the initiation of voter registration programmes by local authorities in Agok.

12. On 25 August, Misseriya community leaders publicly threatened violent action, including war, if a referendum was held in the Abyei Area in October without their participation. The Misseriya leaders also publicly criticized the Government of the Sudan on 30 August over its lack of response to the measures taken by the Government of South Sudan in preparation for the referendum.

13. On 3 September, the joint communiqué that was issued following the summit between President al-Bashir and President Kiir in Khartoum provided a step in the right direction. It stated: "The two parties affirmed the importance of continuing their constructive dialogue for the resolving of the remaining and pending issues including Abyei and the borders. They emphasized the necessity of reaching a speedy agreement on the establishment of civilian institutions in Abyei to pave the way for the two Presidents to reach a final resolution of the issue". Concrete measures now have to be urgently taken by the two Governments to reduce tensions on the ground.

14. Finally, the Abyei Area Joint Investigation and Inquiry Committee, tasked by the African Union Peace and Security Council to investigate the circumstances surrounding the killing of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief on 4 May 2013, commenced its work on 24 July. Following a brief suspension owing to objections raised by the Government of the Sudan regarding its name and mandate, the Committee resumed its work and conducted visits to Khartoum, Juba, the Abyei Area and al-Muglad (Southern Kordofan, Sudan) from 17 to 26 August. During its visits, the Committee met with Sudan and South Sudan Government officials,

including President Kiir, the Sudanese National Investigation Committee for Abyei Area Security, representatives of the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, the UNISFA leadership, representatives of humanitarian organizations and various witnesses to the incident in question. On 31 August, the Chair of the Committee, Anil Gayan, asked the African Union Commission for a temporary suspension of the work of the Committee pending translation of records received in Khartoum and al-Muglad. The report will be submitted to the Peace and Security Council when completed.

IV. Status of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism

15. The operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism continued in accordance with the implementation plan agreed upon between the Sudan and South Sudan within the framework of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Addis Ababa on 8 March 2013 (see S/2013/168, annex). The headquarters of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and sector headquarters in Kadugli and Gok Machar are now operational. The expected deployment of the force protection unit will enable the Mechanism to undertake ground verification and monitoring missions and thereby achieve full operational capability. Twenty air reconnaissance missions have been conducted since the activation of the mechanism.

16. Preparations are under way for the deployment of the additional 1,126 troops authorized under Security Council resolution 2104 (2013) for the force protection unit. The force protection unit will be composed of 1,096 military personnel, while the remaining 30 military personnel will be deployed as staff officers to support the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. An advance party of 117 troops is expected to be deployed in late October 2013. The remainder of the headquarters elements and two force protection companies with company-owned equipment will follow the advance party as soon as possible. The other two force protection companies with company-owned equipment will be deployed at 60 days' notice.

17. A major obstacle to the full operationalization of the Mechanism remains the parties' dispute over the location of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone centreline in two key locations. The African Union Border Programme Technical Team visited the Mechanism headquarters in Kadugli and two locations within the Zone from 3 to 15 August 2013. The Technical Team was established by the African Union Commission on the basis of the 9 June 2013 proposal from the African Union High-level Implementation Panel to conclusively determine the location of the contested centreline in order to establish border crossing checkpoints and subsequently operationalize the border crossing corridors. The purpose of the Technical Team's visit on this occasion was to determine the centreline in the Heglig-Bentiu and Kosti-Renk corridors and to operationalize them. The Technical Team was accompanied by representatives of the African Union and the national technical teams from the Sudan and South Sudan.

18. The Technical Team successfully completed the first phase of its visit by informing the local communities and authorities about the centreline determination process. However, further progress was obstructed when the team's attempts to erect

beacons to mark the centreline met resistance from Government of South Sudan authorities in the Heglig-Bentiu corridor and from local South Sudan communities in the Kosti-Renk corridor. The UNISFA Head of Mission and Force Commander advised the team's Sudan and South Sudan representatives to report these developments to their respective Governments and to impress upon them the need to immediately withdraw their forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and inform their local authorities of the team's responsibilities.

19. In a letter to the parties dated 30 August, Thabo Mbeki, Chair of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, suggested that the High-level Committee, in which the Vice-Presidents of the Sudan and South Sudan oversee the implementation of the 27 September 2012 agreements between the two countries, should meet and consider the convening of the Joint Border Commission and other border mechanisms. On 3 September, during their summit meeting in Khartoum, Presidents al-Bashir and Kiir confirmed the importance of supporting and facilitating the mission of the mechanisms proposed by the High-level Implementation Panel, including the determination of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone centreline, in order to establish border corridors that would allow the smooth movement of people, goods and oil, in addition to the cross-border movement of pastoralists.

20. On 7 September, Mr. Mbeki held consultations with President Salva Kiir in Juba. During the meeting, President Kiir confirmed that he would send parliamentarians and dignitaries from Unity and Upper Nile States to the disputed Heglig-Bentiu and Kosti-Renk border crossing corridors to sensitize the population and explain that the determination of the centreline was for security purposes only and had nothing to do with the demarcation of the borderline itself, which remained to be determined.

21. The aerial verification and patrols of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism were suspended on 24 July following a request by the South Sudan team, and subsequently owing to facilitation being provided for the work of the African Union Border Programme Technical Team. The Mechanism resumed aerial verification and monitoring missions on 30 August.

22. UNMAS continued its activities in support of the Mechanism. In coordination with the Mechanism's training unit, UNMAS provided training for Sudanese, South Sudanese and international monitors in demining patrol skills, explosive hazards, health and safety in the field and hostage survival. UNMAS patrol support teams remain deployed in Kadugli and Gok Machar and on standby for emergency mine action tasks. UNMAS also provided support to the African Union Border Programme Technical Team in determining whether there were any mines or explosive remnants of war at border crossing point locations.

V. Humanitarian situation

23. During the reporting period, humanitarian agencies focused primarily on preventive measures to mitigate the impact of the rainy season on vulnerable populations. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations provided rainy season support consisting of foodstuffs, vegetable seeds and hand tools to 2,000 households. The non-food items emergency shelter cluster assisted over 3,000 families with non-food items including plastic sheeting.

24. The International Organization for Migration conducted a verification exercise confirming that between July 2012 and July 2013, 16,080 displaced people returned to 66 villages near or above the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab River. Estimates based on monthly food distributions suggest that an additional 10,000 people returned during the same period to villages below the River Kiir.

25. During the reporting period, the health situation remained normal and stable. However, the lack of health assistance throughout the Abyei Area continues to limit disease surveillance, leaving populations exposed to disease outbreaks. While access by humanitarian organizations from the Sudan has improved, the bulk of assistance comes from South Sudan. Heavy rains throughout the Abyei Area limit humanitarian access to remote locations.

VI. Protection of civilians

26. Pending the establishment of the Abyei Area temporary institutions, UNISFA continued to implement its multifaceted conflict prevention and mitigation strategy, which consists of monitoring, early warning assessments, day-and-night patrols and promotion of dialogue between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities and their interaction with Government officials in Sudan and South Sudan. In implementing this part of its mandate, the mission focused on the current intercommunal tensions and the overall threat of incursions by unauthorized elements into the Abyei Area. With its extensive field presence, constant foot patrols and air reconnaissance missions, the UNISFA military component has thus far been able to prevent an outbreak of intercommunal violence. During the reporting period, the mission's troops remained deployed in all potential flashpoints within the Abyei Area.

27. The parties' failure to establish the temporary institutions, including the Abyei Area Administration and Council and the Abyei Police Service and the resulting administrative and law and order vacuum remains a considerable concern. In order to avert a resulting deterioration in the security situation, UNISFA held a meeting with national monitors of the Joint Military Observer Committee from the Sudan and South Sudan to discuss the negative impact of the absence of these institutions. The representatives from the Joint Military Observer Committee agreed to form neighbourhood watch committees in consultation with the local community leaders in order to protect their respective communities. On 20 August, UNISFA held a meeting with local community leaders and representatives in Diffra in an effort to sensitize them to the importance of maintaining good intercommunal relations and to explain the mission's mandate.

28. There have been no new developments with regard to the operationalization of human rights monitoring in the Abyei Area, as provided for in paragraph 18 of Security Council resolution 2104 (2013).

VII. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

29. As of 5 September, the UNISFA military component stood at 3,881 of its authorized strength of 5,326. The remaining personnel are earmarked for the

aviation unit and the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism force protection unit, or for service as military observers or staff officers. The troops on the ground remain deployed in accordance with the rainy season concept of operations, whereby air and foot patrols are increased to compensate for the impassability of many roads. The troops have also utilized this period to engage in training exercises in accordance with the UNISFA Force Commander's training directive.

30. Currently, 15 of the 50 authorized police personnel are deployed in UNISFA, including the Senior Police Adviser. The UNISFA police component continued to provide support and to advise the UNISFA Head of Mission and Force Commander, as well as members of the military component, on public order management, crime analysis and community security issues within the Abyei Area. The police personnel deployed in Abyei town and Agok monitored the work of local community-based security networks and alternative justice mechanisms.

31. On 28 August, the United Nations police and UNISFA launched a joint training session for 30 quick response force personnel on crowd control. The purpose of the training is to enhance the mission's capacity to adequately manage crowds and violent demonstrations using minimum authorized force.

VIII. Mission support

32. UNISFA completed the construction of hard-walled prefabricated structures for the remaining 2,700 troops residing in tents. This included the expansion of two camps of the former United Nations Mission in the Sudan and the construction of five new ones. In addition to its headquarters in Abyei town, UNISFA currently has three sector headquarters co-located with three company operating bases. It is expanding another site for the relocation of the logistics company.

33. Nevertheless, critical infrastructure projects have yet to be completed. The main constraint in this regard is the ongoing rainy season and the refusal of Sudanese vendors to deliver laterite and perform other services in the Abyei Area out of fear of reprisal attacks following the 4 and 5 May 2013 security incidents. Critical projects include road improvement, air connectivity and construction of warehousing facilities.

34. UNISFA has signed a contract to build a fixed-wing aircraft landing strip inside the Abyei Area. The contractors have visited the site, completed an assessment and done soil sample testing. The mission has also been helping, on a reimbursement basis, the new rations contractor to complete the food storage facilities in Abyei town.

35. UNISFA continued its efforts to establish the full operating capacity of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. During the reporting period, the sector headquarters in Gok Machar was established. The expansion of the camp designated to accommodate the force protection unit is in progress. Meanwhile, renovation is under way at the Mechanism headquarters in Kadugli to accommodate the force protection advance party. The mission has also established regular flights from Kadugli to Khartoum and from Gok Machar to Abyei town.

36. The mission completed the selection of land for the sector headquarters in Buram and Malakal. The headquarters in Buram will be located adjacent to an

existing team site of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. The headquarters in Malakal will be constructed next to the team site of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. In addition, UNISFA has prepared documents for the site preparation and infrastructure projects in Malakal and for the expansion of the apron at the airport to accommodate three attack helicopters. The project documents have been submitted to the Global Service Centre for clearance.

37. During the reporting period, the Government of the Sudan issued 23 visas to UNISFA personnel (1 international civilian staff, 17 military officers and 5 international contractors).

IX. Financial implications

38. The General Assembly, by its resolution 67/270 of 28 June 2013, appropriated $307.1 million for the maintenance of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014. The additional resources requirements that arise from Security Council resolution 2104 (2013) will be submitted to the General Assembly during the main part of its sixty-eighth session.

39. As of 9 September 2013, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNISFA amounted to $129.8 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $4,778.2 million.

40. Reimbursement to the contributing Government for troop- and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made for the periods up to 30 April 2013 and 30 March 2013, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

X. Observations and recommendations

41. The security situation and the status quo in the Abyei Area are becoming increasingly untenable. The ongoing impasse in the implementation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement, the lack of progress in addressing the final status of the Abyei Area and the likelihood that local communities may take matters into their own hands, including by unilaterally organizing a referendum in October 2013, have the potential to escalate into intercommunal violence.

42. The UNISFA Head of Mission and Force Commander has impressed upon the Sudanese and South Sudanese co-chairs of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee the need for it to assume primary responsibility for tempering the growing tendency of both the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities to take security matters into their own hands. It is essential, therefore, that the parties remain in communication on how to approach the issue of intercommunal coexistence pending the determination of the final status of the Abyei Area.

43. I commend the commitment of President al-Bashir and President Kiir to maintaining good neighbourly relations and to further addressing the issues related to the implementation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement in order to pave the way for the resolution of the final status of the Abyei Area. However, in order to avoid deterioration of the security situation in Abyei, the two Presidents must urgently resolve their remaining differences with respect to the 21 September 2012 proposal of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. I urge the two Governments

to immediately resume meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee to provide guidance for the management of political and administrative matters. I also urge them to commence the establishment of the institutions stipulated in the 20 June 2011 Agreement, as agreed during their last summit meeting.

44. I encourage the Sudan and South Sudan to continue their cooperation with UNISFA for the timely operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the full establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone. In particular, both parties must commit themselves to fully implementing their security agreements, including those relating to the determination of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone centreline, and complete redeployment of their respective forces. The full implementation of these agreements is necessary in order to ensure security along their common border. The current deadlock reflects conflation of the temporary establishment of the centreline with the final demarcation of the border. The focus on the issue of the centreline and delays in the discussions on the disputed and claimed areas and demarcation of the border have raised fears in South Sudan that any determination of the centreline would ultimately define the border between the two countries. To resolve this issue, I urge the parties to proceed immediately with the establishment of the Joint Border Commission and move forward with the border demarcation process. The two sides should also exchange their written submissions to the African Union Team of Experts to advance the process relating to the disputed areas.

45. As requested by the Security Council in paragraph 12 of its resolution 2104 (2013), the Secretariat conducted a review of the configuration of UNISFA, the relevant risks and threats and the force posture and troop ceiling required for implementation of the Force's mandate, with a view to a possible reconfiguration (see annex III to the present report). The conclusion of the review is that the current troop ceiling and configuration are necessary and adequate to implement the mission's mandate. I would thus request the extension of the Force's mandate, within the current configuration, for one additional year.

46. Finally, I would like to commend my Special Envoy, Haile Menkerios, and the African Union High-level Implementation Panel led by Thabo Mbeki for their sustained efforts to assist the Sudan and South Sudan in resolving the outstanding issues between them, including those related to Abyei. I also would like to express my gratitude to the UNISFA Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major-General Yohannes Tesfamariam, and his staff for their continued efforts to enhance peace and stability in the Abyei Area and to support the parties in the implementation of their security agreements.

Annex I

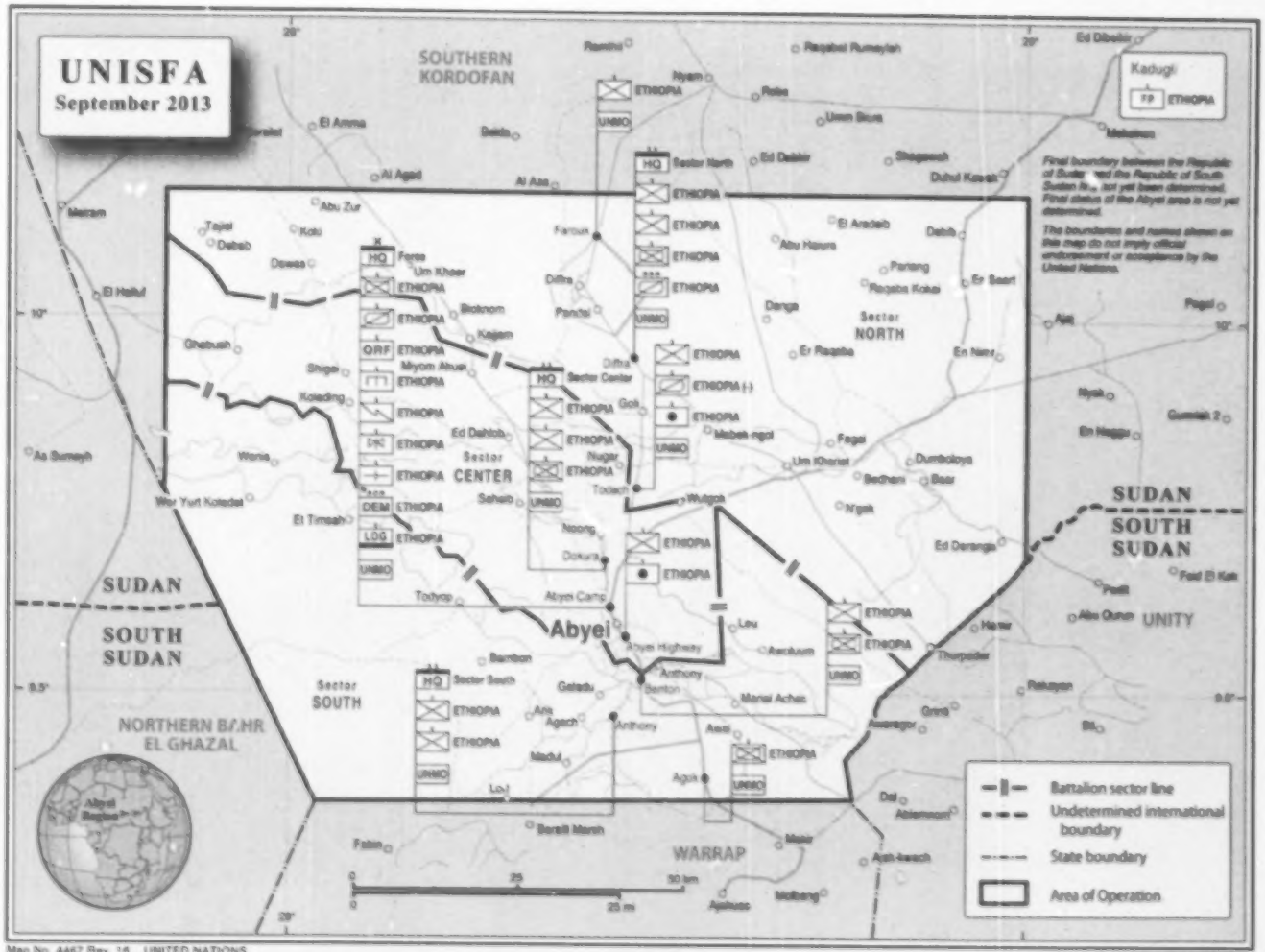
Composition of the military component of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (including the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism)

Country	*Description*	*Personnel*	*Total*
Benin	Experts on mission	2	3
	Contingent troop	1	
Bolivia	Experts on mission	2	2
	Contingent troop	–	
Brazil	Experts on mission	2	3
	Contingent troop	1	
Cambodia	Experts on mission	3	3
Ecuador	Experts on mission	1	2
	Contingent troop	1	
Ethiopia	Experts on mission	70	3 826
	Contingent troop	3 756	
Ghana	Experts on mission	3	4
	Contingent troop	1	
Guatemala	Experts on mission	1	1
	Contingent troop	–	
India	Experts on mission	1	3
	Contingent troop	2	
Mongolia	Experts on mission	2	2
Namibia	Experts on mission	3	4
	Contingent troop	1	
Nepal	Experts on mission	2	4
	Contingent troop	2	
Nigeria	Contingent troop	3	3
Paraguay	Experts on mission	1	1
Peru	Experts on mission	1	2
	Contingent troop	1	
Philippines	Contingent troop	1	1
Russian Federation	Contingent troop	2	2
Rwanda	Experts on mission	1	3
	Contingent troop	2	
Sierra Leone	Experts on mission	1	1
Ukraine	Experts on mission	2	2
United Republic of Tanzania	Contingent troop	1	1
Uruguay	Contingent troop	1	1

Country	Description	Personnel	Total
Yemen	Contingent troop	2	4
	Experts on mission	2	
Zambia	Contingent troop	1	1
Zimbabwe	Contingent troop	1	1
Total		**3 880**	**3 880**

Annex II

Deployment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei


UNISFA
September 2013
SOUTHERN KORDOFAN
NORTHERN BAHR EL GHAZAL
WARRAP
SUDAN
SOUTH SUDAN
UNITY
Abyei
Sector NORTH
Sector CENTER
Sector SOUTH
Battalion sector line
Undetermined international boundary
State boundary
Area of Operation
Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.
The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Map No. 4467 Rev. 16 UNITED NATIONS
September 2013
Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

Annex III

Review of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

A. Justification

1. Further to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2104 (2013), the Secretariat conducted a review of the configuration of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), taking into account the outcome of the previous review conducted in February 2013 and the changes in the operational environment since then. The objective of the review was to assess the relevant risks and threats, as well as the force posture and troop ceiling required for the implementation of the Force's mandate, for possible reconfiguration of the Force by the Security Council.

B. Threats

2. UNISFA is operating in an increasingly complex security environment and the security situation remains extremely volatile. The Abyei Area has both internal and external potential sources of conflict. Tensions in the Abyei Area are driven by the following dynamics: (a) intercommunal rivalry between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya stemming from overlapping claims to land, pasture and migratory routes; (b) the failure of the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to implement the 20 June 2011 Agreement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area (S/2011/384, annex); and (c) disagreements between them over the final status of the Abyei Area, including modalities for the Abyei referendum. As a result three main threats that can trigger violence and instability in the Abyei area:

- Intercommunal violence during migrations and obstruction of the central migration corridor
- Threats pertaining to the return of displaced persons
- Incursion/presence of unauthorized forces, including the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Migration

3. The traditional migration of the Misseriya into and across Abyei takes place between November and June on a yearly basis, along three main corridors. While the migration continues along the eastern and western corridors southwards into Unity State and Northern Bahr el Ghazal State in South Sudan, there have been criminal attacks on the Misseriya and sporadic, small-scale clashes between the local populations and the migrants. The central corridor through the areas in and around Abyei and Agok towns has been obstructed in the past two years and access into Warrap State denied by the State Government for the last five years. These tensions and the resultant insecurity have led the migrants to make increasing efforts over the last two years to stay within the Abyei area during the migration period. In addition, an increase in the return of displaced Ngok Dinka has also exacerbated tensions by increasing the physical proximity between the two communities,

especially during the migration season. Consequently, the area becomes highly populated with mutually hostile populations and vulnerable to insecurity. The areas that were earlier populated by both of them, such as Abyei town, are now completely depleted of Misseriya or Sudanese refugees, including those from Darfur. This situation is a source of recurrent tension and recriminations that could escalate into violence, which has so far been prevented only by virtue of the mission's ability to implement its conflict prevention and mitigation strategy, including the maintenance of strict separation between the local communities and their cattle and intensive patrolling in support of early warning.

Return of displaced persons

4. During the period under review, UNISFA observed a growth in the number of Ngok Dinka returnees in anticipation of the organization of a referendum to determine the final status of Abyei in October 2013. In view of the Misseriya's hostility to the holding of a referendum without inclusion of their right to vote, the likelihood of intercommunal incidents escalating into open confrontation, with the associated loss of lives and political tensions between the Sudan and South Sudan, is very high.

5. The situation is further compounded by the delay in the establishment of the Abyei Area administration and the complete absence of government institutions. The absence of local police has resulted in a law and order vacuum and the steady increase of intracommunal and intercommunal crime.

Incursion by unauthorized forces

6. The events of April 2012 related to the crisis of Heiglig, during which SPLA and SAF perpetrated incursions into Abyei through the Thurpader-Diffra axis and the Mkines-Diffra axis, respectively, illustrated the risk of the Abyei Area being destabilized by incidents occurring in neighbouring border areas. While SAF and SPLA are deployed outside the Abyei Area, they remain in close proximity and can enter in a context of escalating tensions. Armed militia groups are also operating around the area, including "Tora Bora", a militia allegedly affiliated with the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement-North and the Justice and Equality Movement, in the north-east corner of Abyei.

C. Force posture

7. The configuration of the UNISFA military component in Abyei is based on three sectors dedicated to prevent conflict, manage migration and deter the re-entry of SAF and SPLA as well as any other armed elements within the boundaries of the Abyei Area. The current configuration is attached as appendix 1. The three motorized battalions are deployed across the Abyei area of operations, one per each sector. The sector headquarters in Sector North and Sector South are located at Diffra and Anthony, while the Sector Centre headquarters was redeployed further north from Abyei to Dokura.

8. UNISFA maintains a robust posture through its permanent presence in company operating bases across its area of operations and retains flexibility, through deployment of temporary operating bases and other mobile deployments, to respond to emerging threats. In order to prevent conflict, UNISFA troops endeavour to

maintain a continuous presence at flash points and create a dynamic separation between Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities as the migration passes along three corridors through the Ngok Dinka populated areas. The deployment is dynamic in nature and shifts according to the migratory trends and movement of returnees. Patrols are conducted mainly to create a secure and safe environment, accompany the Misseriya migrants in their southward progression and deter any external or unauthorized military force within the area of responsibility. As a result, all UNISFA troops including reserves are occupied during the dry season, from November to June. The absence of the Abyei Area Administration puts an additional burden on UNISFA troops, who also patrol to maintain law and order.

9. During the rainy season, from June to October, surface communications are adversely affected, necessitating a wet season deployment by UNISFA. While the overall concept remains the same, certain untenable deployment locations are vacated. The season also restricts operational mobility, thereby limiting area domination and monitoring. This is mitigated by increased air and foot patrols. Hence, while the troops' tempo is relatively slow during the rainy season, it is clear that during the dry season, UNISFA troops are overtasked and overstretched.

10. UNISFA has created two composite task forces comprising a tank and artillery company each in Sector North and Sector South (Todach and Banton) to support the motorized battalions in providing credible deterrence against incursion by unauthorized forces. This contingency remains necessary in view of the existing threat assessment. The troops of these units are nevertheless also tasked with patrolling and holding flash points.

11. Currently, one company of tank and one of artillery is deployed at Todach in Sector North to form a composite task force with elements of the motorized battalion for the sector. The task force for Sector South will be deployed to Banton following the construction of accommodation during the forthcoming dry season. The quick response force company is maintained as a reserve in Sector Centre. The enabling units are adequate to meet the requirements of supporting the UNISFA troops, except for the limited horizontal capability of the engineering company.

D. Conclusion

12. There is no significant change in the threat assessment following the last review exercise, which was undertaken in February 2013. The intervening period corresponds to the rainy season in Abyei and has traditionally seen a decrease in the interactions of the communities and as a result in the number of security-related incidents (see appendix 2). However, contrary to past trends, there has been an increase in the number of security-related incidents during this period, each with the risk of escalation related to the armament of both communities. The 4 May 2013 killing of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief by Misseriya, the 20 May 2013 attack on Sudanese contractors of UNISFA by armed Dinka youth, the 12 June 2013 killing of two Dinkas by armed assailants in two separate incidents followed by cattle rustling and the attack, on the same day, against an oil station at Ajaj, are some of the incidents to be noted in this regard.

13. The situation has been managed and further escalation has been prevented by the firm commitment and timely and in some instances pre-emptive intervention of UNISFA troops, facilitated by their current configuration and strength. In view of

this analysis, the current troop ceiling of UNISFA in Abyei appears necessary and should be maintained to meet the requirements of mandate implementation.

14. Any reduction of troops from Abyei in view of the current security environment would carry significant risks for the mission. These risks include a reduction of the ability of UNISFA to implement its conflict prevention and mitigation strategy during the migration season. This includes maintaining areas of separation between the local communities and their cattle and conducting intensive patrolling. It would also diminish its ability to monitor and provide a deterrent effect and protect the Abyei Area from incursions by unauthorized armed groups and intervene in a timely manner in intercommunal and intracommunal disputes or security incidents. The likelihood of intercommunal incidents escalating into open confrontation, with the associated loss of lives and political tensions between the Sudan and South Sudan, would be very high.

15. Further reviews of the mission's force strength should be contingent upon the progress of the parties in implementation of the 27 September 2012 cooperation agreements, including the establishment of Abyei Area institutions and agreement on the process to determine the Area's final status. It is also recommended that any review of the UNISFA configuration should be planned with consideration of dry season security challenges, including risks associated with the simultaneous Misseriya migration and returns of internally displaced persons.

Appendix 1

UNISFA force configuration

Type	Units	Total	Remarks
Infantry	3 x Battalion	2 586	Motorized
Tank	2 x Companies	138	T-55
Artillery	2 x Batteries	140	122mm Howitzer
Quick reaction force	1 x Company	175	
Engineer company	1 x Company	150	
Multi-role logistic unit	1 x Unit	250	
Aviation unit	1 x Aviation Unit	200	2 Utility and 3 Attack Helicopters
Medical	1 x Level II	63	
Force headquarters company		151	Force headquarters
Staff officers		122	
Military observers		225	Including 90 Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism monitors
Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism force protection unit		1 096	Battalion headquarters + 4 companies
Additional staff officers		30	
Total		**5 326**	

Appendix 2

Chronology of security incidents since 29 May 2013

- 29 May: four Misseriya herders carrying three AK-47 rifles, one G3 rifle and 60 bullets were disarmed in Noong (central Abyei)
- 5 June: UNISFA dismantled a roadblock mounted by four Misseriya youth in Diffra (northern Abyei)
- 7 June: a Misseriya carrying an AK-47 rifle with 19 bullets was disarmed in Farouk (northern Abyei)
- 8 June: six trucks stolen from Sudanese construction company by unknown persons at Abu Gazala were recovered by UNISFA troops and returned to the company
- 9 June: UNISFA increased security patrolling within and around the Abyei town camp following a demonstration by Ngok Dinka youth
- 10 June: a Misseriya carrying an AK-47 rifle was disarmed at Diffra while another Misseriya carrying an AK-47 rifle with 27 bullets was disarmed at Goli (northern Abyei)
- 11 June: 28 Misseriya youths on 14 motorcycles armed with 7 AK-47 rifles, 1 pistol, 10 knives and 149 bullets were trying to loot vehicles on Abu Gazala road (northern Abyei) but were apprehended and disarmed
- 12 June: a fuel station located 62 km east of Diffra town (northern Abyei) exploded and caught fire; the exact cause of the explosion could not be ascertained but local resident informed UNISFA that they had seen approximately 12 people in a pickup truck moving towards the incident site just prior to the explosion
- 1 July: approximately nine unidentified assailants, dressed in army camouflage and armed with AK-47 rifles, attacked and stole around 60 head of cattle and shot dead an Ngok Dinka man, aged 19 years, in Galary village (southern Abyei).
- 28 July: four unidentified men armed with two AK-47 rifles and 250 rounds of ammunition were disarmed at Manyang (southern Abyei)
- 6 August: local resident informed UNISFA robbers attacked Noong village (central Abyei) to steal cattle; they were killed by the local residents
- 13 August: six to seven unidentified armed assailants entered Mikol village (eastern Abyei); one assailant was killed by inhabitants
- 19 August: UNISFA troops disarmed a man carrying one firearm and two bullets at the Farouk checkpoint (northern Abyei)